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JULY 2007 EDITION

Stop by and see what's going on in *your* Center on Halsted!

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Center on Halsted Youth Program

As the Director of the Youth Program, I enjoy the privilege of speaking about our program and showing off our new Polk Bros. Foundation Youth Center. In doing so regularly, I often hear from many of our community's adults, "I wish there was a place like this for me when I was growing up." Over the past month I have heard this statement countless times in response to my description of recent happenings here.

Over Pride Weekend, nearly 200 youth celebrated by coming to "A Night of Stars," our LGBTQA Prom. In addition to having a safe and affirming alternative to this traditional springtime ritual, our youth built their leadership skills by organizing and implementing this night of dinner, dancing and crowning of the royal court. Kudos and thanks to all the many youth and adult volunteers who made this night possible.

Saturday night was followed by Sunday morning at the Pride Parade. Once again, our youth made us proud by filling a float with joy, music and enthusiasm. They were a beautiful sight to behold as they danced their way up Halsted, past the Center and down Broadway. Perhaps most gratifying was the cheers from the adult bystanders who looked upon our young people with awe and appreciation at their display of public pride and courage.

Finally, two summer programs are in full swing here at the Center. For six weeks, eleven of our youth are learning the art of film-making and the skills of attending a job five days per week while being paid through After School Matters. And for two weeks, About Face Youth Theatre, Beyond Media and Broadway Youth Center are collaborating on a film and theatre piece concerning HIV. The Center is literally filled

with young people from early morning to night, keeping us young and reminding us why we do the work we do . . . so no one ever has to say again, "I wish there was a place like this for me when I was growing up." It's here.

Janine M. Denomme, PhD
Director of Youth Program

Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders (SAGE)

A Few Things You May Not Know About the SAGE Space

The dedicated SAGE space in the Center on Halsted has a new name, the *John Baran Senior Center*. John Baran was a local businessman who put a great deal of energy and resources into the LGBT community. He established the John Baran Fund in 1989. Currently, the fund is administered by directors Ed Mogul, Tom Klein, M.D., Tom Tunney and Ron Dale.

In addition to the contribution for naming the *John Baran Senior Center*, the Baran Fund has contributed \$3 million to AIDS charities. Other recipients of large gifts from the Baran Fund have been AIDSCARE, Chicago House and Howard Brown Health Center.

Gracing the walls of the *John Baran Senior Center* is a series of portraits of LGBT icons by artist Harry Sudman. Included are James Baldwin, Michelangelo Buonarroti, Montgomery Clift, Billie Jean King, Rudolph Nureyev, Gertrude Stein, Andy Warhol and Oscar Wilde. As recounted at sudmanart.com, Harry Sudman is a Chicago painter whose "large scale commissions have been seen by millions of people. Their prominent locations in commercial venues like Hyatt Hotels, Wheaton College, Commerzbank of Germany and Chicago's Esquire Theatre have exposed him to a wide audience for over twenty years. Sudman's smaller works relate themes of contemporary urban culture using collage-like remnants of street posters, fliers, and graffiti left behind on the walls of cities from London to Chicago."

An interesting effect of the interior windows at Center on Halsted is that these portraits can be seen not only from the *John Baran Senior Center*, but the meeting rooms, employee lounge and second floor hallway as well.

Serena Worthington
SAGE Director
Center on Halsted

State of Illinois HIV/AIDS & STD Hotline

The month of July is and continues to be quite eventful for every member of the Hotline team! Summer brings with it sunshine, heat, outdoor festivals and, of course, increased call volumes. But in spite of added responsibilities and summer-related cabin fever, Hotline counselors are busy preparing visual presentations based upon research papers written earlier in the year regarding various sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). Given the dynamic, ever-changing nature of healthcare and disease information, our Hotline counselors are constantly investigating and amassing the latest facts to provide the most accurate STD (including HIV) education to our callers. Among the subjects being covered are Herpes, Hepatitis B & C, Syphilis, Scabies, Gonorrhea and Condom-411. Once completed, each of these topics will be presented during informative sessions to Hotline staff by the counselor who authored his or her respective, original paper. This wealth of information and knowledge is readily available to the public and all Center on Halsted staff and interns, as are all Hotline counselors. We sincerely hope that our expertise and experience benefits not only the State of Illinois, but our colleagues

and community partners as well.

Luis Bustamante

Hotline Counselor

Mental Health Services

As the capstone event at our recent symposium, special tribute was paid to an essential component of the Mental Health Program—our volunteer psychotherapists.

From the very inception of the organization, volunteers have long been an integral part of Center on Halsted (COH). In 1981, Gay Horizons (as the organization was then called) formally launched a psychotherapy program. This program was staffed entirely by volunteers, totaling 9 in number. Twenty-five years later, the Center is still proudly partnering with volunteer psychotherapists to meet the mental health needs of Chicago's LGBT community. Some of the volunteer therapists recognized recently have histories with the organization that encompass almost all of the Mental Health Program's quarter century of service.

The relationship between the Mental Health Program and the volunteer psychotherapists is a mutually enhancing one. The program and its clients benefit from the collective expertise of these established clinicians. All of the volunteer therapists are licensed professionals with a minimum of 5 years post-graduate experience. They bring important skill sets and unique training that would otherwise not be available to our clients. In addition, they work with clients in their own office settings, scattered throughout Chicago and the neighboring suburbs. This allows us to serve clients in a wide geographic range, thus eliminating difficult logistical barriers to LGBT affirming care.

In turn, the Center provides a valuable outlet for mental health providers who wish to give back to the LGBT community. We provide regular clinical consultation groups and in-service trainings on current trends and issues in mental health care. These forums also create networking opportunities at the Midwest's largest LGBT community center.

At a festive reception, COH was proud to recognize the service of 6 dedicated volunteer psychotherapists, with 5 or more years of service to the organization. In reality, most of them have been affiliated with the organization for far longer than 5 years. As a body of work, their combined efforts total over 70 years of service to literally hundreds of clients. However, the richness of this kind of legacy cannot be measured in numbers alone but through an individual appreciation of each volunteer. I would like to highlight their accomplishments below:

Bruce Aaron—Bruce is a licensed clinical social worker with post-graduate training in Gestalt Therapy. He has completed more than 1,000 hours of advanced studies at a number of Gestalt Institutes around the country, most notably the Gestalt Institute of Cleveland. He is currently in full-time private practice, and will be joining the staff of the Cathedral Counseling Center on a part-time basis. Bruce's first contact with this organization was as a volunteer psychotherapist from 1985 to 1991. In 1991, he was appointed Director of Psychotherapy Services, where he served until 1998. The following year he returned to volunteering for the Center, where he continues seeing psychotherapy clients and supervising social work interns.

Bertram Cohler—Bert is a licensed clinical psychologist. He is the William Rainey Harper Professor of Social Sciences at the University of Chicago. In addition, he is a co-chair for the same university's Department of Human Development and the Department of Psychology. He has published widely on gay life in America and is co-author of *The Course of Gay and Lesbian Lives: Social and Psychoanalytic Perspectives*. Bert's latest book, *Writing Desire: Sixty Years of Gay Autobiography*, was just published by the University of Wisconsin Press. Bert has functioned as a mentor, supervisor and teacher for literally thousands of students and beginning clinicians. He is a renowned consultant with expertise in psychoanalytic treatment. Bert has been a volunteer psychotherapist here since 1996 and was awarded the Volunteer of the Year award in 1998.

Robert Hartke-Robert is a licensed psychologist. He works as a staff psychologist for the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago, providing clinical services and conducting research focused on persons with physical disability. In addition, he has operated a part-time private practice with a focus on LGBT issues for over twenty years. Aside from his doctorate in psychology, he is a diplomate in Rehabilitation Psychology through the American Board of Professional Psychology and holds a Masters in Public Health from the University of Illinois at Chicago. Robert began volunteering here in 1984 and is now in his twenty-third year of service.

Douglas Nygaard-Doug is a licensed clinical social worker. He initially volunteered his services at Illinois Masonic during the late 1980s, working with AIDS patients whose life expectancy was fewer than 2 years. Doug became a volunteer psychotherapist here in 1991. During his 16 years with Center on Halsted, Doug has provided direct treatment to clients and clinical supervision to mental health interns. He has worked in private practice since 1981 and recently completed the Adult Psychotherapy Training Program at the Chicago Institute for Psychoanalysis.

Melinda Rezman-Melinda or "Mindy" is a licensed clinical professional counselor. She has advanced training in the areas of couples therapy, psychodynamic treatment and working with the LGBT population. Her resume includes clinical work at Jewish Children's Bureau and the Fillmore Center. She is currently in private practice. Mindy has served as a volunteer psychotherapist for Center on Halsted since 1985.

Diane Schank-Diane is a licensed clinical psychologist. She is currently in private practice, with an emphasis on the LGBT population. Her specialties include couples work, relationship issues and sexual problems. Diane has served as a volunteer here since 1994. In her own words: "As a volunteer, I have gotten more than I have given. So, thank you, COH, for being there-for me personally, and for the community at large."

In conclusion, I would like to thank all of our volunteer psychotherapists, both past and present, for their invaluable contribution to our program.

Jason T. McVicker, LCSW, RDDP

Director of Mental Health Services

Anti-Violence Project

Take a Stand Against Violence

This month the Anti-Violence Project will hold its first crisis line volunteer training at our new Center. The training, on three Saturdays during the middle of our balmy Chicago summer, is not geared for just anyone. Working with the Center's Volunteer Manager, new volunteers are introduced to the many opportunities available to share their time, efforts and expertise in a variety of settings here at the Center. I am always blown away by folks who press on to learn more about the Anti-Violence Project. "How can I help, what can I do?" they say.

The AVP offers two trainings per year, one in summer and one in late winter. Often volunteers must wait for the next available training session. This upcoming training will be the third that I have had the pleasure of facilitating. I have always mentioned to AVP volunteers -when we meet in person, when we share phone consults or at special events-that every volunteer is the main lifeline of the project. Without our dedicated volunteers we could not provide the valuable community resource of a 24-hour crisis line.

There is indeed a sense of pride to know that this training and future ones will foster volunteers as they take a stand against violence and provide immediate help to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender survivors of domestic and hate violence, sexual assault, discrimination and police misconduct. After training in crisis intervention, counseling survivors of violence and advocacy, new crisis line volunteers carry pagers and provide information and referrals to callers.

If you or someone you know is a victim of LGBT discrimination, domestic

violence, hate crime, pick-up crime, police misconduct or sexual assault, please call the **AVP 24-hour crisis line at 773-871-CARE (2273)**.

Laura A. Velazquez
AVP Manager

Dr. David J. Lochman Cyber Center

June was an intense and exciting month in the community and also at the Dr. David J. Lochman Cyber Center. There were more than 250 unique users who logged in to use a computer more than 1,300 times! Cyber Center users have checked their e-mail, worked on resumes, looked up directions, checked their Myspace pages, and written letters-to name a few of the things that happen here.

July is moving along at the same pace and has been just as busy-we've started an *Introduction to Computers* class, and have delivered instruction to 34 individuals. The class has been exciting as we've explored hardware and software, Windows XP, and Microsoft Word.

The very first Cyber Center Volunteer Orientation will take place on July 26, and we are excited about getting more people involved.

Stay tuned to our Web site (www.centeronhalsted.org) for upcoming classes and offerings!

Brian Minka
Cyber Center Coordinator

Community & Cultural Programs

July is the month for building community and that's just what we've started to do. Every Monday Gayco has developed special improv shows for us to come together, laugh and make new friends. See spoofs of your favorite television shows, including the *Golden Girls*.

Every Wednesday, women Meet Us on the Rooftop for a mix and mingle after work social gathering from 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm or come early for women's open gym from 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm, stay later, and enjoy the resurgence of Dyke Mic 2.0 from 8:00 pm - 9:30 pm.

Our free legal clinic is on Wednesdays by appointment only. If you need free legal advice please do not hesitate to call to schedule an appointment or, for immediate help, we can refer you to an appropriate lawyer who will listen to your claim and assess you by phone.

Every Thursday we're Dancing on the Rooftop from 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm. Each week learn a different dance and meet some of our community partners who have come out to host the evening. Thursday is also Men's Open Basketball from 6:30 pm - 9:00 pm.

Dancing not your forte, but writing is? Then join other writers for Writing Our Lives writer's workshop, a fun way to increase your writing skills and, more importantly, to tell your story. The writing workshop is from 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm.

If reading is more to your liking, don't miss our books for the month of July and August as we celebrate our third quarter (July 2007 - September 2007)

CenterPages: Out in Sports: A Recognition of our LGBT Athletes

July

Alone in the Trenches: My life as a gay man in the NFL
By Esera Tuaolo

